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2013 Federal – State Marketing Improvement Program (FSMIP) Grants Announced

The United States Department of Agriculture just announced a solicitation of applications for FSMIP grants. Projects must address the needs of multiple producers or agribusinesses at the state, multi-state or national level while focusing on marketing challenges or opportunities within the direct, wholesale or retail segments of the agricultural marketing chain. USDA / AMS also encourages submissions that:

- Increase marketing opportunities for agricultural producers
- Create stronger economies in rural communities
- Market agricultural products meeting new Food Safety Modernization Act mandates
- Lead to the successful development of local and regional food systems in rural communities

Note that proposals must have a strong marketing focus, must involve research, and the primary beneficiaries must be agricultural producers and agribusinesses. Proposals that involve training or education programs must include a research component that tests the effects of the program on the marketing goals. Agricultural and commodity organizations, community-based organizations, economic development organizations, and groups that represent Native American and socially disadvantaged producers are encouraged to apply. Multi-State and/ or regional initiatives are also encouraged to apply.

FSMIP applications must be received no later than 3:00 PM, Thursday, May 23, 2013.

Please send applications via email to: Daniel.Rhodes@state.ma.us.

[Click here for USDA's FSMIP webpage.](#) For more information, or if you have any questions, please contact Daniel Rhodes, FSMIP Coordinator for the MDAR at Daniel.Rhodes@state.ma.us or (617) 626-1728.



2013 USDA Organic Cost Share Program

The Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources has received authorization from the USDA – Agricultural Marketing Service (“AMS”) to reimburse certified organic crop and livestock producers. Reimbursements are limited to 75% (seventy-five percent) of an

individual organic crop and livestock producer's certification costs, up to a maximum of \$750 (seven-hundred and fifty dollars) per certificate or category of certification, for the program year. Three (3) categories of certification eligible for reimbursement under the AMS cost share program are crops, wild crops and livestock. Applicants must successfully receive their first organic certification from a USDA accredited certifying agent or have incurred expenses related to the renewal of certification between October 1, 2012 and September 30, 2013, thus the 2013 Federal Fiscal Year.

For more information and a copy of the Organic Cost Share Reimbursement Forms, please visit www.mass.gov/eea/docs/agr/markets/organic-cost-share-certification-program.pdf.

USDA Risk Management Agency (RMA) - Deadline for Nurseries, May 1

The Deadline to purchase a USDA Risk Management Agency(RMA) multi-peril crop insurance policy (MPCI), for nursery, (MPCI) is May 1, 2013.

The MPCI policy provides protection for wholesale nurseries producing and marketing nursery plants grown in standard nursery containers or in the field. The plant inventory value report is used to declare the value of your insurable plants. A plant inventory value report for each insured practice is required. Coverage levels range from 50 to 75 percent of your plant inventory value. A Multi-peril policy can protect you from losses from adverse weather conditions, failure of irrigation water supply, fire and wildlife.

USDA RMA policies are sold by local private crop insurance agents. A list of crop insurance agents is available at all USDA Service Centers throughout the U.S. or at www3.rma.usda.gov/tools/agents/



MDAR's mission is to ensure the long-term viability of agriculture in Massachusetts. Through its four divisions – Agricultural Conservation & Technical Assistance, Agricultural Markets, Animal Health, and Crop and Pest Services – MDAR strives to support, regulate and enhance the rich diversity of the Commonwealth's agricultural community to promote economically and environmentally sound food safety and animal health measures, and fulfill agriculture's role in energy conservation and production. For more information, visit MDAR's website at mass.gov/agr, and/or follow at twitter.com/MDARCommish.